

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are presently pending in this case. Claims 1 and 12 are amended by the present amendment. As amended Claims 1 and 12 are supported by the original disclosure,<sup>1</sup> no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Tanio (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,389).

The outstanding rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 recites in part:

an image data converting unit configured to convert a format of image data from a first format to a second format, said first format and said second format each being one of a multi-value format, a four-value format, a binary format, an eight-value format, and an MH/MR/MMR format; and  
a format unifying unit configured to unify a plurality of formats of image data by utilizing said image data converting unit.

Tanio describes an image processing apparatus that converts an image from a first color space to a second color space. Color conversion circuit 304 of Tanio manages the color space conversion, and the outstanding Office Action cited color conversion circuit 304 of Tanio as “an image you converting unit” as recited in original Claim 1.<sup>2</sup> However, it is respectfully submitted that color conversion circuit 304 of Tanio is configured to convert between *color spaces*, such as from an RGB color space to a CMYK color space.<sup>3</sup> Thus, color conversion circuit 304 of Tanio does *not* convert between a first format and second format, where each format is chosen from among a multi-value format, a four-value format, a binary format, an eight-value format, and an MH/MR/MMR format. In fact, it is respectfully

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., the specification at page 19, lines 5-14.

<sup>2</sup>See the outstanding Office Action at page 3, lines 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>See Tanio, column 6, lines 23-35.

submitted that Tanio does not describe **any** element that converts between any of a multi-value format, a four-value format, a binary format, an eight-value format, and an MH/MR/MMR format. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Tanio does not teach “an image data converting unit” as defined in amended Claim 1. Consequently, Claim 1 (and Claims 2-11 dependent therefrom) is not anticipated by Tanio and is patentable thereover.

Amended Claim 12 recites in part:

unifying a plurality of formats of image data to a single format by converting the formats of image data by hardware, said single format being one of a multi-value format, a four-value format, a binary format, an eight-value format, and an MH/MR/MMR format; and  
consolidating and printing image data whose formats are unified.

As noted above, color conversion circuit 304 of Tanio does not convert between a first format and second format, each chosen from among a multi-value format, a four-value format, a binary format, an eight-value format, and an MH/MR/MMR format. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Tanio does not describe that any other portion of the described device performs such a function. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Tanio does not teach “unifying a plurality of formats of image data to a single format” as defined in amended Claim 12. Consequently, Claim 12 is not anticipated by Tanio and is patentable thereover.

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Reply to Office Action of July 11, 2007

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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